

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PFOR, BTRA, UK, NH

SUBJECT:NEW HEBRIDES LAND DEALS

REF: LONDON 7960

1. WILLIAM WEEMS, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO SENATOR INOUE, BRIEFED DEPARTMENT OFFICERS ON HIS DISCUSSIONS IN LONDON AND PARIS. WEEMS INDICATED THAT FRENCH OFFICIALS WITH WHOM HE SPOKE APPEARED SYMPATHETIC TO THE PLIGHT OF THE HAWAIIAN LAND PURCHASERS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES AND WERE INCLINED TO SEEK AN EQUITABLE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF ANGLO-FRENCH REGULATIONS WHICH LIMIT IMMIGRATION AND HAVE RETROACTIVELY PREVENTED HAWAIIAN INVESTORS FROM REGISTERING THEIR DEEDS OF OWNERSHIP. WEEMS SAID THE FRENCH (LAVIGNE) WERE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE IN ORDER TO REACH A SETTLEMENT ON THIS ISSUE. HE ADDED THAT SENATOR INOUE'S IMMEDIATE PURPOSE WAS TO ENSURE THAT THIS ISSUE WAS ON THE AGENDA OF UPCOMING ANGLO-FRENCH DISCUSSIONS ON THE NEW HEBRIDES.

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2. WEEMS SAID HE UNDERSTOOD FROM ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY

LARMOUR THAT THE PROMISED WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE BRITISH POSITION WILL BE ESSENTIALLY AS WAS PRESENTED ORALLY, E.G. HMG WILL NOT PERMIT THE AMERICAN LAND PURCHASERS TO ENTER THE NEW HEBRIDES AND SETTLE THE LAND THEY HAVE BOUGHT. IF THIS IS THE CASE, EMBASSY LONDON SHOULD SOLICIT VIEWS OF APPROPRIATE FCO OFFICIALS AS TO HOW THEY BELIEVE THE PROBLEM MIGHT BE RESOLVED.

3. FURTHERMORE, EMBASSIES SHOULD INQUIRE AT RESPECTIVE FOREIGN OFFICES WHETHER THIS ITEM WILL BE ON THE AGENDA FOR ANGLO-FRENCH TALKS, WHAT THE RESPECTIVE POSITIONS OF HMG AND GOF ARE LIKELY TO BE AND WHETHER A DECISION TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE LAND INVESTORS IS LIKELY TO BE REACHED IN THE COURSE OF THESE TALKS.

4. AS INDICATED REFTTEL, SENATOR INOUE, SUBJECT TO SCHEDULING, PLANS TO VISIT LONDON AND PARIS SOMETIME BETWEEN JULY 10 AND DATE OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH MEETING SPECIFICALLY TO DISCUSS THE NEW HEBRIDES PROBLEM. DEPARTMENT REQUESTS EMBASSIES' RECOMMENDATIONS OF FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL FOR SENATOR INOUE TO MEET. WE BELIEVE HE SHOULD SEE SOMEONE AT POLITICAL LEVEL WHO CAN INFLUENCE IF NOT DETERMINE THE OUTCOME AS WELL AS SOMEONE AT A HIGH WORKING LEVEL FAMILIAR WITH THE ISSUE.

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